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Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4882nd meeting

Monday, 15 December 2003, 12.05 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Tafrov	(Bulgaria)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Lucas
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	Chile	Mr. Andereya Latorre
	China	Mr. Cheng Jingye
	France	Mrs. D'Achon
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Sow
	Mexico	Mrs. Arce de Jeannet
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Mr. Arias
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Howe-Jones
	United States of America	Mr. Rosenblatt

Agenda

Protection of civilians in armed conflict

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03-65596 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Protection of civilians in armed conflict

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls its resolutions 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, as well as the statements by its President of 12 February 1999 (S/PRST/1999/6), of 15 March 2002 (S/PRST/2002/6) and of 20 December 2002 (S/PRST/2002/41), and reaffirms the need to keep the protection of civilians in armed conflict as an important item on the Council's agenda.

"The Security Council also reaffirms its concern at the suffering inflicted upon, and hardships borne by, civilians during armed conflict, and recognizes the consequent impact that this has on durable peace, reconciliation and development. The Security Council strongly condemns all attacks and acts of violence directed against civilians or other protected persons under international law, in particular international humanitarian law in situations of armed conflict, including such attacks and acts of violence against women, children, refugees, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups; reaffirms the need for parties to armed conflict to take all possible measures to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of United Nations and associated personnel as well as personnel of international humanitarian organizations in accordance with applicable international law; and recognizes that secure humanitarian access and the swift re-establishment of the rule of law, justice and reconciliation are essential components for an effective transition from conflict to peace. The Security Council reiterates its call to all parties to armed conflict to comply fully with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and with the rules and principles of international law, in particular international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, and to implement fully the relevant decisions of the Security Council. The Security Council recalls the obligations of States to respect and to ensure respect for international humanitarian law, including the four Geneva conventions, and emphasizes the responsibility of States to end impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and serious violations of humanitarian law. The Security Council also notes with interest the proposal presented by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs at the 9 December open meeting of the Security Council for a '10-point action plan' on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and looks forward to further discussions and consultations on this issue.

"Recalling that on 15 March 2002 the Security Council adopted the Aide Memoire annexed to the statement by its President (S/PRST/2002/6) as a means to facilitate its consideration of issues pertaining to protection of civilians, and recalling further that in the statement by its President of 20 December 2002 (S/PRST/2002/41) the Security Council expressed its willingness to update annually the Aide Memoire in order to reflect emerging trends in the protection of civilians in armed conflict, the Security Council adopts the updated Aide Memoire contained in the annex to this presidential statement. The Security Council reiterates the importance of the Aide Memoire as a practical tool that provides a basis for improved analysis and diagnosis of key protection issues during deliberations on peacekeeping mandates, and stresses the need to implement the approaches set out therein on a more regular and consistent basis, taking into account the particular circumstances of each conflict situation, and undertakes to remain actively seized of the matter."

This statement and an updated Aide Memoire will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2003/27.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.